

The British Medical Association
Annual report of Medical Officer of Health
"Copy" Dursley Rural

Population in 1891	12,166
Area in Acres	26,521
Inhabited houses	3,116

The district consists of 11 parishes viz. -

Cann, Coaley, Dursley, Kingwood, North Nibley,
Nymphfield, Owlpen, Slimbridge, Stinchcombe
Uley, and Watton-under-Edge.

Inspector of Nuisances Mr J Robinson Silver
Street Dursley.

To the Chairman and members of the Rural
District-Council.

Gentlemen,

Situation of Districts The rural district of Dursley is situated on the sides and buttresses of the Western Cotswolds which consist largely of the white lime-stone. Many of the houses are built upon the hill-sides, or on the abutments which run out to different distances into the valley of the Severn. Slimbridge is the only parish wholly situated in the valley, so that for the most part the district is

naturally well drained. The chief streams which drain the district are the Oram, which drains Aley, Dursley, and Cam, and receives a part of the drainage of Coaley, empties itself into the Berkeley and Gloucester Canal.

The Ribley Brook which drains North Ribley, empties itself into the Matford Brook. The Dyer's Brook and Alderly Brook which unite at Kingswood, these drain Botton-under-Edge and Kingswood and joins the Wickwar Brook. The Wickwar Brook is a boundary between the Dursley Rural District and the Chipping Sodbury and Thornbury Rural Districts.

None of these streams are used for drinking purposes by human beings.

Water supply
An abundant supply of wholesome water is one of the essentials to good health. So that your Council is in touch with one of the most important questions relating to Public Health, in considering the best and most economical method of water supply for some parts or all of Dursley. As is generally known the cottagers of Boulton Lane, The Slad, Fort Fields, Union Street and Hunger Hill besides people scattered in other parts of the town have to fetch their drinking water from the Broadwell and before 95

was out the supply for drinking purposes to the Workhouse also had to be carried from the Broadwell. Several sources were considered, and at one time it looked almost as though the supply could be got from the well at the Workhouse, but an analysis was made which showed it to be not beyond suspicion, and at your request on October 24th I sampled a quantity to be sent to Dr Percy Frankland, who certified to its being polluted by soakage from a cesspool. This threw out this source as a supply. Other sources were considered as Cold Harbour, the waste from Mrs Eyre's Hydraulic Ram, and Coaley Wood. This last being the most satisfactory for one very important reason, and that is, that the town could be supplied by gravitation. It is also I believe likely to prove a most abundant supply, and I am informed that Lord Fitzhardinge has graciously consented to the use of the supply upon whose property the springs arise. The only thing I do not like about it, is that at a short distance from it, on the top of the hill is a cow yard.

It is over the white lime-stone-rocks, and cracks and crevices convey sewage matter a long way. Still as far as I know the Spring Lynnings great and lesser yield excellent water. Coaley has its supply from the spring Lynning, this I have examined and found most satisfactory. This supply is conveyed to the Village in iron pipes laid from the spring; and stand-pipes are placed at different-distances down the Village. This supply is under your Council. The Cam water supply is for the present in abeyance. The Parish Council desired to utilize the waste from Mrs Eyre's Hydraulic Ram, this could have been done by little expenditure of money; but the waste being claimed by a mill owner the matter has for the present dropped.

The Foston. Under-Edge water-works may be considered to be a great success. It was feared last summer, that with the prolonged drought there might be a scarcity, and so the supply was curtailed, but it proved sufficient, and having stood the test of one dry summer it may be looked upon as an established Institution. This and also the Kingwood water supply are

The
disposal
of
sewage
and
sewers

under your Board. All the remaining
parishes in the district are supplied
by springs, and deep or shallow wells,
and some of these are not very satisfactory.
The sewage of Dursley is partly water-
borne, partly dry-earth-closets, and
partly the old fashioned privy-vault.
The scavenging is done weekly, when the
dry earth closets are emptied. The water-
borne finds its way into the Cam.
One of the sewers empties into the Broadwell,
and so the sewage is passed through the
Rim Mill. This is a very unsatisfactory state
of things. The sewers of the town are to a large
extent very defective and in 1895 we had the
opportunity of seeing a sample in a loose-
stone-sewer passing through a tradesman's
cellar, and of which he was not aware,
until it became choked and burst into his
cellar, flooding it with stinking sewage
matter. This was filled in and the sewer
turned into the North-main-sewer. The sewage
of Wotton-under-Edge is partly water borne,
but only to a small extent. The main sewers
are the Lym Lane running from Haw Street,
The Old Town sewer, a short one in the Culver-
hay, a short one beginning near the bottom
of Long St runs down the Steep, also a short
one beginning in Church St which empties

into the Old Town sewer, these all empty into the River Beane.

The town is very largely supplied with dry-earth-closets; the scavenging of the town being done weekly. The other parishes may be said to have no broken sewers; and in neither parish is there anything like a system directing to and discharging it-sewage at a common outlet; so that there is no treatment of sewage in the district.

All other parts of the district are supplied with dry-earth-closets, or the privy with large vaults. This to my mind is the most objectionable of all, and especially so when a large vault is built against any part of a dwelling house. Some sewage in the parish of Coaley finding its way into a water-course, although this was not used for drinking purposes; but for supplementing the water supply from the stand-pipes, and used for house-washing &c. I with Mr. Robinson met two of the members of the parish Council on February 26th we visited and inspected 44 places, and found three privies and a latrine placed near or near it. These we got removed, there were also several drains from cottages emptying into the water-course instead of into cess-pools. I have inspected in different parts of the district nuisances complained of the number of 22, The Wickwar Brook included.

Inspection
Works

These nuisances arose from pigsties, gutters, ditches, choked drains, sewers &c. most of which were placed in the hands, or if not already there - of the Nuisance Inspector to deal with and were remedied.

Jan - Under sec. 30 & 22 Housing Working Classes Healthy Act 1890 I with Mr. Robinson inspected a dwelling building in Golden Lane and also one in Comeley Road, Enigwood, on May 28th. These at the time were not occupied. The owner of the building in Golden Lane promised to pull it down within a month, but before that time expired it fell.

Under sec 46 Public Health Act 75 I inspected a cottage in Dursley which has been remedied and one in Coaley which was satisfactory.

November 22nd I inspected a cottage in Huntingford and was satisfied that no nuisance

existed according to sec. 91 Public Health Act 75. New
Three new dwellings were inspected by myself and Mr. Robinson to ascertain the water supply
Public Health (water) Act 1878 sec. 36.

Water
Five samples of water were examined by me during the year.

The
lodging-houses in Wotton Under Edge were visited by us in April and again in 1891. In September and October we inspected the Bake-houses and Slaughterhouses in the district. The Bakehouses were 36 in number and not one can be said to be under ground. Slaughter-houses -

All were in a satisfactory condition.
The slaughter-houses inspected were 31 there
too were in a satisfactory condition.

Infection Disease
In addition to the above I have made 25 visits
and inspection to homes in which there has
been Infectious Disease of some kind, during
the year, making suggestions and giving
advice as to how to prevent its spread.
There were several cases of Scarlatina of a
mild type in the beginning of the year
in Dursley Coaley and Slimbridge, and
towards its end it appeared again in
Watton-under-Edge and also a sharp outbreak
in Dursley of a severe type. This spread
from two centres, the origin of first doubtful,
of the second imported from Sydney. We
were not compelled to close any of the
Public Elementary Schools during the year
in the district. It proved sufficient to ex-
clude children from infected homes from
school.

Prosecution
There was one prosecution during the year,
of a person, who, being, in my opinion,
without a sufficient supply of wholesome
water, - it being rain water only, - refused
to lay on the water from the Watton-under-
Edge water supply, - The case was dismissed.
Attendance at Meetings
I attended twelve meetings of the Board
during the year.

Isolation We have in the district - no hospital for the Isolation of Infectious Diseases and in 90- I drew up two reports on the subject, the second after visiting and inspecting one of iron and one of brick. I advised your Board to approach the Gloucestershire County Council to put into force the Isolation Hospital Act 1893. I also advised that if possible steps should be taken to try and form a conjoint-hospital for two or more districts, as on the whole it would be ^{proportionally} less expense to erect a conjoint hospital; and also to work; besides it would be more likely to keep employed a staff of officials, than a small hospital for this district only. I have great confidence in early isolation as the strongest measure in preventing the spread of Dangerous Infectious Disease.

Vital Statistics The Estimation of the Population,
For the estimation of the population at all ages living at the middle of July, 1895. I have adopted a down-grade scale, and that is taking the average rate of decline for the last thirty years, the loss is 38. per annum, and the estimated population is 12,005. The births exceed the deaths by 104 this is called the "Natural Increment." In this district in the past for so long a period both immigration and "Natural Increment" have

been unable to balance the loss to the district by emmigration.

Births The vital statistics for the year 1895 are as follows viz: - There were 293 births registered during the year, exactly the same number as registered in 1894. Of these 159 were males and 134 females there were therefore 25 more males born than females. In 1894 there were 11 more males born than females. The birth-rate for 1895 per thousand of estimated population living at all ages at the middle of the year is 24.40. This is called "the crude birth-rate" and it is exceedingly low. It was 24.3 in 1894, 27.8 in 1893. The birth rate for all England and Wales was 29.6.

Deaths The deaths registered during the year were 189. Of these 91 were males and 98 were females. The death-rate for the year per thousand according to estimated population is 15.74, in 1894 it was 15.6 in 1893 it was 16.3. The death-rate for the County in 1894 was 13.63, for all England and Wales it was 16.6. This is a low death-rate and had it not been for the high rate of mortality in the Watton district in the first-quarter of the year it would have been lower than 1894.

The annual death rates for the different districts are as follows: - Curley district 13.33, Aley district 14.20, Watton-under-Edge 18.65. The deaths in the Watton-under-Edge district in the first-quarter

were 42 and the death-rate per thousand according to estimated population and reckoned at annual rate was 34.04. Now was this high rate of Mortality apparently due to epidemic disease. Five died of Apoplexy and Cerebral Haemorrhage, seven from Natural decay, two only from Influenza with complications and nine from acute Respiratory diseases.

The deaths arranged according to Table "A" at various ages are as follows. Under one year 24, one and under five 9, five and under fifteen 0, fifteen and under twenty-five 4, twenty-five and under sixty-five 46, sixty-five and upwards 101.

Infant Mortality, -

The deaths under one year are 24, and the rate of Infant Mortality is 81.8 in 94 it was 109.2 and in 93 it was 100.8. The rate of Infant Mortality is not given in the report for the County of Gloucester for 1894. For all England and Wales it was 137. The rate of Infant Mortality is exceedingly low especially considering the district is not purely Agricultural. "Infants" are said to form a delicate index to the sanitary status of a population. No death occurred in an infant under one year from Diphtheria Measles, or whooping-cough. Taking for comparison the groups of ages

by far the larger number died in the period of old age: - 48 died between 70 & 80 Thirty-one between 80 & 90 and two 90 and upwards. In all 81 lived to over 70 years of age. This is something like 42 per cent living to a good old age.

Zymotic Diseases -

And the seven principal Zymotic diseases were the cause of death in eight persons - curiously enough the same number as in 1894. Six of these were under 5 years of age. Five of these died of Diarrhoea and one from scarlatina. Two over five years died of Diarrhoea. The Zymotic death rate per thousand of population is '66, in 94 it was '66, in 93 it was 178. It was not given in the report for 1894 of the County of Gloucester for all England and Wales it was in 1894 1.76. Besides the above one died of Membranous Croup one of Enteric Fever.

No death occurred in the district from Small-pox Diphtheria, Typhus, Enteric Continued or Relapsing Fevers Cholera Erysipelas.

Measles & Whooping-cough or Rheumatic Fever. Thirty-one deaths occurred from the Acute Respiratory diseases and the death-rate is 2.5 in 1894 there were thirteen and

death-rate was 1.07 but by an error it was entered as 2.7. Ten died from Phthisis, & eleven from Heart-Disease, and four from Injuries.

Influenza commenced about the last week in February and began to subside about the end of March or beginning of April lasting roughly about six weeks. Two deaths from Influenza with complications were registered in the first quarter as occurring in Watton. Under-Edge district. Probably a factor in others especially as a complication with some form of chest-disease, such as Bronchitis or pneumonia. Thirteen out of the thirty-one cases of Acute Respiratory Diseases occurred in the first quarter. In the first two or six weeks of 1895, the weather was very severe, soon after the start in 1895. Influenza and chest complaints became prevalent about the last two weeks in 1895 but no death was registered from it.

Compulsory
Registration
The question of adopting the Act for the Compulsory Registration of the Dangerous Infectious Diseases was discussed at a meeting of the Council in December 1895. This when the motion was put to the meeting, - which was a full one, - was rejected by 11 to 6. Being without this Act the contents of Table "B" are very defective as a guide to the amount of sickness there is in the

Table
"B"

Instruct arising from Dangerous Infectious Diseases. The only available source is the District Medical Officers relief books; and the information from this source is very meagre, and not at all worth the trouble it gives to transmit to me.

Other sources are doubtful and uncertain. I may be notified of a case, I may not, but it may come in a round-about way, when I make enquiries. Table "B" informs us that 41 new cases of Scarlatina; 5 of Diphtheria and one of Erysipelas occurred in the district in 1895. In addition the death certificates inform me of one of Membranous Croup, and one of Puerperal Fever.

Prospective Much that has been done in the past for the Public Health much remains to be done so that there is no lack of materials to work with, or subjects to discuss. There is still the Emsley Water Supply, and the Cam water supply; the provision of an Isolation Hospital for the district or a conjoint one for two or more districts; the

Compulsory Notification of Infectious
Disease besides matters of minor
importance; and as the Board of
Guardians the question of Compulsory
Vaccination.

Appended is the Annual report of work
done by Mr J Robinson Inspector of
Nuisances.

I remain

Your Obedient Servant

Francis Jas Joyce

Medical Officer of Health.

Feb 25th 1896

P. F. O.

most of localities
used for the purpose
these. Stables, with
horses being shown
separate localities
(a)

Localities	Mortality from all causes										Mortality from subjoined causes during weeks 19a to 19e of children under five years of age										Total	
	At all ages	Under 5	5-15	15-25	25-65	65+	Under 5	5-15	15-25	25-65	65+	Under 5	5-15	15-25	25-65	65+						
At all ages	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Under 5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
5-15	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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5-15	1																					

Annual Report for the Year ended December 31st 1895
 Dwelling Houses

Overcrowding abated	4
Delapidated & defective repaired	1
Cleaned and disinfected	26
Water supply provided	146

Closets

New provided	2
Rebuilt or repaired	11
Cleaned	23

Drains

New provided	2
Defective remedied	20
Foul ditches cleaned	7

Other Nuisances

Offensive refuse removed	9
Pig nuisances abated	9
Offensive cesspools abated	1
Total	<u>261</u>

Number of Nuisances abated without formal Notice 64

Statutory Notices served 196

Summons issued 1

Total 261

I have visited and inspected 95 Registered Dairies and Milkshops in this District and found them satisfactory. There have not been any Infectious Disease on either of the premises during the Year.

Thomas Robinson
 Sanitary Inspector.

1

20

140

2

11

23

201

201